[1858-8-15]

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Introductory Lecture to the Course on Practice of Medicine, delivered at Philada. College of Medicine, Oct. 15th 1858.

I have the honor, gentlemen, to represent, to you, in this Institution, a Department of momentous importance, and responsibility. Whatever doubt may, with any of the uninitiated, exist in regard to other topics of a medical course, none can ever question the magnitude of the interest, that of the Practice of Medicine. To it, and to Surgery, including with the latter Obstetricy, all the others look, as their end and aim. Upon Practice, as upon a focus, they concentrate their rays. If we may venture to compare the sevenfold emanations of medical collegiate instruction to anything so bright as a prismatic spectrum, — the principles and precepts of the Practice of course ought so to embody and combine the essence and total result of the others that, as the red, orange, yellow, green, blue and violet rays have, each, their representatives among the rest, — it should be typified by the white light, produced by the union and concentration of all; as it is the application of the principles derived from all, that concerns us most in the management of disease.

I am ready, at once, upon this subject, to take refuge in the sentiment, that

learning, ~~and~~ ~~[illegible]~~ ^ ~~But~~, in this age of diffused and classified knowledge — ~~this age, in which the Press has eclipsed the throne, and the magnetic, electric and galvanic battery, in the hands of the old chemists, make the anode & cathode~~ ~~controlled the sceptre~~, when all men's learning, of all ages, takes the wings of the morning sheet that lies upon our table, or is spread in ~~[illegible]~~ pages that fill our libraries, ~~nothing~~ less depends than ~~once~~ upon the individual. The method now, in science, grows, of the most importance, the man of the least.

Dare I, then, thus to place before you so high a standard of the object of the labor we have before us to undertake? If so, – it is but to deprecate your expectation of its being altogether fulfilled; – while I ask for your indulgence,

realization of our ideal of the teaching of the Practice of Medicine, it would require a constellation of abilities and acquisitions, ~~which~~ great in themselves, – and ~~so often~~ very seldom united: ~~more than~~ more than Hippocratic experience; more than Aristotelian learning; more than Platonic eloquence.

But, in this age of diffused and classified knowledge – ~~this age, in which the Press has eclipsed the throne, and the magnetic battery, the Sceptre~~ when all men's learning, of all ages, takes the wings of the morning, and lies upon our table, or is spread in pages that fill our libraries, less depends than ~~once~~ now upon the individual. The method, now, in science, grows of the most importance, the man of the least.

with, therefore, but few grey hairs, with but ~~nineteen~~ years of study of medicine, and but ~~thirteen~~ of practice, the partiality of my colleagues has obliged me to ~~assume~~ maintain the duty of an instructor in this important department. Most of those years, if you will pardon the egotism, I have been, it is true, ~~with~~ spent in the midst of the very Temples of Medicine, ~~the~~ Hospitals and Colleges, — where experience grows ripe with almost ~~with~~ tropical rapidity; and, with the advantage, too, of the preceptorship of one, a veteran indeed, — one who bore the load of half a century of the largest and best used opportunities of observation; — ~~would to Heaven that it might be transferred! For if the mantle of that preceptor could be (indeed) transmitted, with this name, then, with less diffidence would I now stand before you, as an ~~almost trembling~~ interpreter of the Oracles of ~~the~~ practical Medicine.

I would be, however, rather, gentlemen, a leader and a guide in my department than an authority, with you. I claim not to speak ex cathedra. I would be one of you; let us ~~we~~ see what we can do, in the study of the practice of medicine: of the art, as derived from, and founded upon, the science.

~~In this branch, as in others, here and now, I said, that method is of the first importance.~~

The methods of the Practice of Medicine, through the oral ~~and~~ of a teacher, are at least three fold in their possible character.

There have been exemplified, indeed, in different institutions and at different times, and now, three principal modes of didactic instruction upon Medicine. We may designate these as, 1st, the Historical and Learned; 2nd, the Demonstrative and Minute; 3d, the Descriptive and Practical. The traits of two, or all of these may be, and may have been, combined; but they are distinguishable, by features, which I will endeavor briefly to describe.

The first of these, the Historical and Learned, was more often illustrated a hundred years and more ago, than now; although within a much more recent period, the late Prof. Chapman of this city was one of its brightest examples.

This method is characterised, especially, by a reverence for authority in Medicine; by a high valuation of antiquity, or at least of the genius of the ancients; — and by a fondness for tracing, step by step, the progress of medical opinion through a comparison of the opinions of leading individuals of different ages, as well as our own.

There can be no question that advantage arises from this kind of comparison and reference. Historical knowledge of any science is the strongest built, — because it involves acquaintance with the very stones and arches of the edifice; — it is symmetrical and proportioned, and is fortified especially against old errors, which tend to return constantly under new names.

The genius of the ancients, also, well deserves our reverence. It did not alone animate the painter's or sculptor's hand, the orator's voice, or the poet's diction. Science recognised its touch of power. As stands Plato, yet undying, among the immortal records of philosophy, — as ring yet the tones of Demosthenes

over the now ruined ~~deserted~~ Agora, — so must we, after the accumulation of more than twenty centuries of medical knowledge, — yet acknowledge that Hippocrates remains conspicuous as ~~one of~~ the greatest of physicians; one of the best of practitioners, as well as of writers and teachers: and we may look back even before his day, — to "Coan Praenotions" and "Cnidian Sentences," — to show that Medicine was a Science coeval with the birth of Philosophy itself. There is no doubt that, from the writings of Hippocrates, of Celsus, Dioscorides, Galen, Aretaeus, Oribasius, Paulus Aegineta, ~~and others~~, of Erice, Rome, Pergamus, and Alexandria and Arabia, much may be ~~shown~~, ~~that deserves not to lie buried in the musty tomes of undisturbed libraries.~~ Medical learning, ~~too~~, ~~finds~~ a rich harvest in every modern age, and in every civilized country. Witness, in Germany, the earlier names of Boerhaave, Hoffmann, Stahl, and Auenbrugger; of Hufeland and Hufeland; ~~with~~ these of our own cotemporaries, of ~~and nearer~~ already ripe renown, — Skoda, Rokitansky, Wunderlich, Virchow and others. Witness, in Italy, amongst the many, — Ramazzini, Baglivi, Lancisi,

and Forli; all authorities ~~to~~ this day upon various forms of fever: in France, as noble examples, — Bichat, Pinel, ~~Corvisart~~, Laennec, Broussais, Louis, ~~and Chomel~~ Chomel & : in England, Sydenham, Cullen, and Brown, — each a leader ~~lost~~ in his own power, — with a host of ~~followers~~ dead, and an equal host of living successors; — amongst whom you will soon ~~know~~ not already, Stokes, Alison, Simon, Bennett, Budd, Addison, and others, to have become household names; with whom, too, our American ~~Bigelow~~ Rush, Hosack, Drake, Wood, Dickson, Bartlett, and others, La Roche, must be admitted to ~~a equal~~ companionship.

I do not design to frighten you with this array of names; — but, to express, only, in a few words, my appreciation of the high value of medical learning.

The question, how available all this can be made for a course of instruction on the practice of medicine, we will approach directly; — after a statement of some of the characters of the other methods.

Unlike that which we have just noticed, the Demonstrative method cares much less for opinions than for facts. It is inductively; it leans even to materialism in its tendencies, although the philosophy of its teachers may be otherwise. It makes the most of pathology, — and especially of morbid anatomy, with less emphasis on therapeutics. Taking the processes of the naturalist, it observes, classifies and displays, with models, specimens and all other modes of illustration, the details and results of diseases, upon the body, and of the morbid anatomy and chemistry. It delights in statistics; it abounds in apparatus, instruments and calculations. It calls in the aid of the microscope for the minutest inspection, and of other results; in these details and in their exhibition to the senses, is its life. Of the two schools into which medical philosophy has been divided ever since the days of the father of medicine himself, — the Empirics or simple observers, and the Rationalists or Reasoners, — it inclines, often unconsciously, to the former. Of the modern pathologies, it spontaneously favors Solidism rather than Fluidism or Humoralism.

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In this somewhat bare and elaborate display of details the Practice of Medicine, taught on the ~~same~~ method obtrudes itself, it is true, to several of the other branches of the curriculum of Medical Study. They are taught, more or less, as disjecta membra; separate parts; — to be co-organized in the brain of the hearer. The facts of each are mixed with the rest, very much as chemicals are mingled in a test-tube or alembic, — to precipate, or sublime, the desired compound in the students mind. The question is, a natural one, — what point in Medicine or surgery is made more clear, as by an acquaintance with the Hippocampi of the brain, or the Fallopian tubes of the temporal bone, — or the apophyses of the sphenoid, or the Sella turcica? What remedy so we better know how to use because Prof. Rand can prove to us that salts of fulmenic acid with metallic oxides will detonate, — or that dry saltpetre will not explode? And yet it is well, it is necessary that such things, as many of them as possible, should

be taught. Medicine is progressive. Some Day they will all come into use. And, meantime, each of the 12 hundred young and vigorous brains in what, here, or elsewhere, all these facts are annually mixed and stirred, will afford an experiment in thinking, — out of which may come, no one knows how soon, — the very Organon or Principia of Medicine. Some branches, as Anatomy, Chemistry, Mat. Medica, &c, must be essentially demonstrative in their teaching; but, how far this can, to advantage, in our Colleges, be made the case with the Practice of Medicine we will enquire again presently, with much interest.

What I would designate as the Descriptive and Practical method, aims to meet directly the more immediate and greatest wants of the learner.

Disease, after all, is the grand object of our attack; the field of our labor as physicians. Therapeutics constitute

The symptoms and signs of diseases; their history and terminations; the remedies that meet them, and how to use these; such are the great points in practice, at last. It is true, — that routine rules and prescriptions alone, will never do; principles are necessary. These principles must be built on a sound physiology, based on correct anatomy; they require a carefully elaborated pathology; micrology and chemistry, and all other aids to Science, must have contributed to their establishment; but, must the whole of this process be gone over by every student, or even exposed in detail to him, or, can he receive the benefit of the principles as results? — ~~[illegible] the time of day, with all of us [illegible] all that, the [illegible] of [illegible]?~~ This is one question. Certainly, some very excellent medical instruction has been given by those who have chosen the direct practical and descriptive methods; and especially when they have been men of large

practical experience. ~~Such was the case with one of my very distinguished successor predecessors in this chair, — the beloved and lamented Professor Pennypacker.~~ The method of the late lamented Professor Chapman was a blending of this with the historical and learned, already alluded to.

Sketching then, thus briefly, these different plans or ideas of teaching, let us endeavor to compare them, so as to judge whether one has decided advantages over the others.

We must at once admit that each has its positive merits. The possession of Classical and historical lore is, to the physician, a most appropriate accomplishment; ~~and~~ the reading of no medical man, indeed, can be considered complete, until he has obtained some general knowledge, at least, of the history of Medicine and of medical opinions.

And so, the demonstration, to the eye, of all that is tractable in the effects of diseases,

including the use of chemistry and the microscope, for the purpose,
is undoubtedly valuable. Clearly scientific
ideas are thus obtained; — and, if ample time
were allowed in ~~each~~ every case, — such
study, in detail, of all that has accumulated
in modern inductive medicine, would be ~~most important~~ indispensable.

There is no need to expatiate on
the utility of the thus written, — of describing from
the life all the most prevalent diseases, and
of giving the best established modes of treating
them.

But, it is to be remembered, that a
certain time only is allowed for attendance on
a course of medical instruction. That time, it is
true, is too limited; but we cannot, now, help
that. What can be done in that time; and what
can we do to the best advantage?

We cannot begin with the full history
and bibliography of Medicine, from Democedes and Herophilus down
to the present day, — & then traverse all the region of

morbid anatomy and physiological path-
-ology, with all ~~their~~ details, — and, lastly, end
with the description of all known diseases,
and the discussion of the various proposed reme-
-dies, ~~as well as~~ concluding upon those shewn to be the best.
This is too much to undertake. How much of
it all must be attained, in every practical course,
and how much ~~what~~ must be taken for granted, as already
studied, or, left for the more leisurely ~~studies~~
investigations of the future physicians closet, or of adjunct & collated courses? ?
In thus surveying the field of our necessities
for a 5½ months' course, — the ~~[illegible]~~ historical
portion ~~[illegible]~~, ~~must be~~ it will be found, must be, with whatever reluctance,
swept into a small space ~~compass~~, — It will require, however,
more consideration and boldness to dispose of
~~the~~ what we have called the demonstrative part
of the scheme. There is something exceedingly at-
-tractive in its idea, and imposing in its performance,
to see, mapped out before us, the whole details of diseased

structure, seems like gaining very positive knowledge.

Yet, — is this Demonstrative Medicine? Let us not be deceived by a name; — nor, even, by "oculis fidelibus."

To begin with the least of its difficulties; — is it possible to have correct representations of all, or of most, of the lesions which disease produces, or leaves after death, in the human economy? I believe that it is not.

next — morbid anatomy is not pathology — therefore, the necessary — developing medical science & truth — these matters are not necessary to its exactness

Clinical instruction, the true Demonstrative Medicine

morbid anatomy with its — real fresh specimens of morbid anatomy —

Supposing even, that all that we see after death has been really produced by the disease, and not by post-mortem changes, — which, in some cases is quite doubtful; — yet, the difficulty of faithful representation is very great, even by the most skilful artist. Besides which, it is only, whether in the drawing or the model, to one sense that it conveys information; that of sight; we can know nothing of the hardness or softness, brittleness or flexibility, lightness or weight of the diseased structure. Thus, imperfect, even erroneous ideas may sometimes be given; and obscurity may also be left in the mind. Even in the very best of illustrated works on the Skin, for example, whose diseases afford the best of all subjects for graphic delineation, such obscurity sometimes exists. — ~~even in Wilson's last edition of plates, the original edition, we find Scabies Pustulata, and Impetigo Syphilitica represented as so exactly alike that no one could describe or name any difference, judging from the plate alone; while, in inferior works, such as the American Reprint of Mellington, for instance, in

~~my belief, one may learn better the~~ ~~peculiar~~ characteristics of cutaneous ~~disorders without their aid, though with~~ ~~that very imperfect and sometimes in-~~ ~~correct terms they give.~~ and a wrong idea of ~~a~~ thing is often worse than none; being harder to substitute by a true knowledge of it.

But, — further; could we indeed exhibit accurate fac-similes of all the lesions that occur; yet, — morbid anatomy of its most per-fect state, — is not identical with pathology; it is only a portion of its groundwork. Nor is it its main portion. Prof. Chapman used to say, that, to pretend to judge of the whole nature and laws of disease by the inspection of some of the tissues after death, — is like under-taking to judge of a house by the examination of a ~~single~~ brick or two. At least an equally apt simile is, — that which compares it to the

attempt to investigate the cause and nature of tornadoes, by the examination of fallen trees and torn down houses and fences in their path. This is the most apt comparison, — because, in each case, some information may be thus obtained; some, but not all. Never would I think of denying that a great amount of important knowledge is to be gained from post mortem inspection of the diseased body; especially when aided, much more than it is now, by the microscope, and, ~~perhaps~~, by chemistry. But, first, I repeat, — that we cannot thus alone make up pathology; — which requires the careful observation of the deranged actions of the body and its parts under disease, — while it is still living; and, 2dly — it is still a question whether all of this demonstrative matter can be reasonably introduced into a collegiate course of instruction, — or can possibly therefore

full justice done to it, — without detriment to other topics. Minute, continued, and laborious investigation of pathological anatomy is indispensable to the advancement of Medicine as a science; but, to advance, — to teach, & to practice it, — are three different objects. To advance the science is the noble prerogative and labor of comparative few; to practice the art, is the primal duty of the many. The question then may, with some plausibility, be asked on the principle of analogy, must every one who uses the mariner's compass understand the whole theory of terrestrial magnetism? Cannot the deductions of science be made use of without the whole process of their establishment being gone over or adopted by every individual? Lieut. Maury stands almost alone, as a sort of Eolus, — a monarch of the science of the winds and waves; but cannot a navigator employ Maury's chart of the winds & currents, without, first, going to Washington to inspect his multitudinous tables and calculations? It may be very proper, answered

to these inquiries, — that so far, exactly, as the process, in each case, is studied and understood, so far is the use of such applying deductions a scientific man; — be he navigator, agriculturist, or physician. All, therefore, should be taught in such a method, that it is possible to teach. What is possible? Only, that the demonstrative portion shall be subordinate to, and adjusted with, other necessary parts of the course.

Please to understand me here, as endeavoring to indicate distinctly, — the comparative subordination only, not its want of value; of pathological anatomy; ~~— very make illustrated, especially by paintings, models, &c; which, however, in some branches, by far the most efficient means of inculcating these and kindred, other facts extant, amply appear and speak in this College~~ — and, by no means would I, in thus doing, depreciate the importance of Pathology itself. The science of Disease, made up of deductions variously attained,

must be understood, or there is no such thing as principles in Medicine. A truly rational, inductive and philosophical pathology, — is the, yet infantile, almost we might say embryonic, ~~offspring~~ of modern medical science. Every student must make it without any subordination of his ~~one of his~~ main studies; grafting it upon his physiology, — its stem will ~~then~~ become the natural support of those maxims, and processes of reasoning, by which he is made ready to meet the emergencies of ~~every~~ ordinary & extraordinary practice.

Common sense is the healthy atmosphere, in which ~~this~~ growth should take place. Emerson, the idealist, had said, that genius is common sense heated white hot; but, common sense, at the ordinary temperature of the air, will answer our purpose, in medicine, if it be but used ~~directly~~, ~~[illegible]~~, in a proper mode, and economized.

Perhaps it may not be amiss to say, in this connection, what I mean by Common Sense. It is, the unbiassed application of the judgement, in obvious methods, to obvious things. When dealing with abstruse and uncertain questions or topics, it seizes upon those parts of them, those facts, postulates or theories, which stand out clearly: making the most of these, it tears into pieces the flimsy cobweb tissue which is woven by mere imagination, or by a sort of Chinese ingenuity, whose triumph it is to puzzle. Thus it makes, of each great problem, whether in science, politics, or practical life, — a prompt solution, according to the data it possesses; subject to correction, under the same absence of bias, when new facts or considerations come to hand. The application of this faculty, or mode of using the faculties, to the matters of the different sciences connected with medicine, may do much to unravel what at first appears like a tangled maze.

This quality, or habit, of prompt and decisive judgment, is one of the first requisites for success in the medical man. With it, give him close observation, acute perceptions, readiness in the adaptation of means to ends, calm self-possession, and a sympathetic nature, — and he has then only to acquire the great principles of Physio-pathology, and Rational Therapeutics, — based on the essential facts of disease as compared with health, and the essential facts of clinical experience in the treatment of different maladies, — and he may so armed pass, "unshaken, undaunted, untarnished," through numberless epidemics of Cholera, Yellow Fever, — Plague, — or, worse than all, of Quackery. This motto is "Fiat Justitia, ruat cœlum": carry out the indication presented, whatever may be the result. You may easily see that to be thus forearmed, — the physician cannot be too well versed in the facts of the history of diseases, and of their pathology, — nor in the facts of the Materia Medica, and of what we may call empirical or observed Therapeutics, — without which Rational Therapeutics cannot exist.

Yet, I cannot but believe, that an error is often committed, by the attempt to teach the student too much at once. I am sure of this first, from my own experience, and from that of large numbers of the students. As the lacteals and veins of the alimentary canal will absorb only a certain quantity of nutritious matter, however much may be introduced into it, — so, the mind may be saturated; — the brain may become replete. Mental ~~dyspepsia~~ and regurgitation, — colic of the hemispheres, flatus of the wits, result from this. Not an old epicurean Roman emperor could eat seven meals a day; — much less digest them all; so, if we must cram into your minds the whole substance of medical science, day by day, upon these branches, in a 5 months course, you will gladly, I know, give us leave to pick out the bones, and, when we can, to present the essence of necessary knowledge in a concentrated extract. Some learned gentlemen insist upon their pupils devouring the entire animal, even to the hardest of the hoofs and hide; magnifying even the smallest particulars, by a lens of 500 diameters. It should be remembered, that, although the understanding is almost indefinite in its expansion, the memory has its well-defined limits: to over-

~~pass which, is only a waste of words & time.~~ (34) ~~21 3/4~~

The Descriptive and Practical method is on the whole that which accords not only most ~~essentially~~ with the ordinary plan of medical teaching in this country, but also with the genius of the American Mind, and of American Medicine. The ~~[illegible]~~ intellect of our nation is preeminently practical. Capable, to an equal degree with that of any other nation, of effort and achievement in ~~any~~ most of the departments of art, literature, or science, it bends itself most readily to those avocations and modes of action which produce obvious, material, available and great results. Strength in the mass, rather than finish in the detail — fortiter in re, more than suaviter in modo, — is its characteristic. ~~In those works of art and composition which most require power, represented by such names as Powers, Crawford, Hiram Powers, in Sculpture and History, American genius now stands preeminent in acknowledged supremacy.~~

In medical culture and acquirement, while the Germans surpass us for in Pathological Anatomy,

the French in Diagnosis and Micrology, — and the English in Medical literature, ~~and history~~, — it has always been the opinion of impartial as well as competent observers, — that in the actual practice of Medicine the American physicians are even in advance of the rest of the world. With them, Therapeutics are primary; with others, to some extent secondary in interest and attention. Those ideas of Rational Therapeutics, based on the careful study of nature and her powers, which are bodying, in the writings of Sir John Forbes and others, inaugurating a new era in English and German Therapeutics and opinion, have long been familiar here, as the spontaneous outgrowth of the common sense of the American mind, — unbound by authority, and, daring much, yet having its boldness so limited by correct observation, — that its very errors become lessons, — and its progress, when made, is sure and substantial. The publication, years ago, of the writings of Dr Bigelow, upon Nature in Disease, or Self limited Diseases, &c illustrates the tendency to which I am now alluding; and its influence upon teaching has long, with us, been

~~Pass what, is only a waste of words.~~
manifest.

You will be ready, ~~I hope~~, gentlemen, I ~~hope~~, to conclude with me, that, in a short course, under the pressure of the necessities of a student's career, along with the full exposition of the principles of pathology and diagnosis, and of general therapeutics, the most urgent demand upon our time remains to be, for the descriptive and practical teaching of the actual history & characters of diseases in the living subject, — and, of ~~the manner~~ how they are of their therapeutic treatment.

~~The true demonstration medicine is clinical teaching.~~ I wish that this were yet more availably and extensively within the reach of our colleges. The more the student sees of disease, — and as it were, tastes, touches, and handles it, — the more meaning does he find in his lectures, and in his books. In the Hospital and in the College clinique, — and at the private bedside ~~with~~ with ~~the~~ preceptor, — there it is that will be found

the real illustrations of pathology, diagnosis, and practice;— a comparison of which with all ~~the models and paintings of all the museums in the world~~ other methods of exhibition will make them pale into insignificance. I believe that this Hamlet will yield to none in the full appreciation of these as well as of all other means of illustration of the Science and the Practice of Medicine.

The plan, therefore, of the course which we are about to commence, will be based essentially upon the views ~~[illegible]~~ just put forth. We will endeavor to comprehend the subjects of the Causes, the Signs, and the Nature and Character of Disease and Diseases, in as brief terms as it is possible to do, compatibly with thoroughness. We will try to convey sound and reliable principles of General Therapeutics, ~~in~~ anticipation of

their use in application to special Dis-
-eases. This will, of course, be connected
with the classification of Diseases or
Nosology; — and with this a detailed history of
all those maladies of the most important character
which it is possible to comprise in the course of the course & treatment
Course. We may hope, thus, very fairly to go over the
whole ground of necessary matter in connection
with the subject of Practice; leaving all that is
not so to be considered, for your present and future leisure
and industry.

Gentlemen, the responsibility, to
which I alluded at the opening of this
lecture, is not borne alone by us. You, too,
must have a share in it. Let me say, to those
who may have just entered upon the course of study
with us, — have you considered well what it is to
deal with the practice of medicine? ~~How you~~ Ob-
-serve, that it is no child's play, — no mere

trick of trade, or handicraft; — but that the great issues of mortality go with it. To fill a churchyard, — to be partner of the undertaker, may sound, perhaps, somewhat lightly in the ear as a pleasantry; but, to realize it, will be serious indeed.

There are moments in every physician's life, which no man need envy. Generals, statesmen, kings, — have their heavy responsibility; but, the lives of all or any of these may be at the mercy of their physicians; & so, all or any depend upon them. ~~Think of Dubois,~~ They may, ~~as~~ like the boatman on the Tiber, carry Cæsar and his fortunes. Think of Dubois, at the bedside of an empress in accouchement! Europe waits the result of his attendance; it may decide the fate of an age, or of a continent. What a destiny does he grasp within the blades of his forceps! What a moment of anxiety, till the first cry

Think of Dr Craik, at the side of the dying Washington! Had the same illness occurred in the midst of his active and portentous career, that would have been, indeed, a fearful hour.

of that helpless thing is heard, which may, hereafter, sway the sceptre of royalty from the Tuileries, or aid in expiating its centuries of crime under the guillotine! A fortune as a fee may not seem ill-placed for such a responsibility: but, in lesser spheres & in merely private life, (and in a country where, thank Heaven, royalty is not,) any one of us may be placed, where he would cheerfully sacrifice hundreds, perhaps thousands to be safely through with a duty of an equivalent kind. The reward of success, in the grateful attachment of patients, in the distinction and position of the practitioner with "blushing honours thick about him", is, it is true, not always, oftentimes, proportionately great. But, only the well-prepared can calculate upon success; and, in the event of inevitable failure, they alone know that it was inevitable, and, with a calm conscience and tranquil mind, only they can conduct a retreat in safety, where they had hoped in vain to find a victory.

Let us, Gentlemen, hope that this may be the career of each one of you. ~~I trust that you will~~

~~wrestle with the high problems of your~~

~~[illegible] — [illegible] or its mission well~~

~~And so,~~ — If not yours, or ours, be any fortune in science

~~like~~ similar to that of the Promethean ~~theft~~ of light, — or like

that of our own Franklin, the Prometheus of later day,

~~[illegible] impiety fulmen, sceptrum, [illegible]~~, —

if ours, he shed no Pheton-gift of dangerous venture into regions

of untrodden truths) — "Dark with excess of

bright", — we hope that you may still be amongst the most

useful and honored of your species; as the first

members of what may, — in comparison with

any aristocracy of the world, ~~or a democracy~~ — be

~~counted~~ esteemed as no mean order; — the great body

of intelligent and accomplished American

physicians!

I have already endeavored to convey to you, gentlemen, ~~what is~~ my conception of the legitimate objects of the ~~course~~ course of instruction ~~which~~ ~~about to~~ commence, ~~commence tomorrow, gentlemen, such will be our aims.~~

It is assumed that a winter campaign is before us; — and, we shall seek from every quarter resources to ensure your ~~[illegible]~~ success, and ours. We ~~[illegible]~~ ~~[illegible]~~ ~~[illegible]~~ enthusiasm on your part; and then, both are sure of final success. We will be strong in a unity, ~~[illegible]~~ gentlemen, hardly to be dreamt of where men count by hundreds, in the teeming crowd, where individuality is lost sight of. We will be strong in enthusiasm; — and this is the life of action. And so, — if the class of the Philadelphia College of Medicine be not the largest in the world, — it shall be the best instructed. We have determined it, — and you will sanction ~~our~~ determination.

appreciated, — his aid doubted, — its value aspersed and denied? So is Religion!

Once in a while, too, — both men and communities are aroused to a true sense of the need they have of medical science, — even such as the world can yet afford. — As Byron says, — "although we sneer

In health, — when ill we call them to attend us,
Without the least propensity to jeer."

~~I was called~~, In the autumn of ~~the last month~~ 1834, I was called to an occasion, upon which my pride of profession was ~~roused and~~ much gratified. A whole community was afflicted; — In an inland town, a hundred miles away, — Cholera had broken out: the cold death stretched out his shrunken hands; — collapse withered the strong-limbed man, — and the delicate mother, — and even the child; and, with this epidemic disease, — the equally epidemic & truly contagious panic prevailed. By hundreds,

the frightened people fled in every direction; the sick from their beds, — to die in the street or the railroad car; the rich, with his family, leaving the luxurious home, — and the starving, his hovel; so that, in three days, — one half of the whole population had left the town.

Ominous fires were burning at every corner.

The streets were deserted. All houses were closed; — a dreary stillness, not of the Sabbath — prevailed; — soon, not even funerals passed, — and crape was withheld from the shutters; — for, people had no time for forms and rites of grief! — The bed, — or the floor, — or the pavement, — the coffin and the grave; — this was their progress! And even coffins could not be procured from the place; many miles away they went to obtain enough of this dreary merchandise. Provisions were no longer brought by the country people of the neighborhood to the town. ~~The sick people~~ ~~were~~ ~~in~~ ~~with provisions~~ Railroad trains ~~were~~ even ceased to run — although ~~the~~ the freight business of the place had been very heavy;

The inhabitants of ~~the~~ neighboring towns dreaded, we were informed, — even communication by mail! It was a deserted, ~~a~~ abandoned, ~~a~~ isolated place.

At this time, was it, I say, that I was justly proud of our profession. The cry became, give us physicians! The honorable band of medical men of the locality, — true to their place & service, were overtasked: they needed ~~aid~~ aid: the poor as well as the rich must be tended, — and death gave too much work for all. The population of the town grew, — the sick, — the dead, — the nursing, — and the physicians!

Is not that an ~~noble~~ ~~honorable~~ honorable vocation, gentlemen, — whose post, — at such an hour as this, — is that of danger and action? When all others fly, — and shrink, — and tremble, — then to go near, and work, and watch, by night as well as by day? And the people ~~troops~~ welcomed those who yielded their assistance as generals, who had come to aid a beleaguered camp. All who went were the guests of the community.

Would that ~~a~~ more could have here one ~~one~~ for ~~Bedtiffers~~! it, in its time of suffering!

~~If~~ you wish for ~~you~~ ~~other~~ even more thrilling instances, turn to ~~the~~ work of Dr Benjamin Rush, — ~~look~~ which you will find on ~~the~~ shelves of ~~our~~ College Reading Room, a work of great interest; — his history of the yellow fever in 1793, in this city; or, read the account published of the dreadful epidemic of the same disease a few years since in Norfolk & Portsmouth, in which some of our own alumni did themselves great honor. The credit, — says he, — which the new mode of treating the disease acquired, in all parts of the city, — produced an immense influx of patients from all quarters. My pupils were constantly employed. I visited, & prescribed for between a hundred and a hundred and twenty patients a day. In the short intervals which I spent at my meals, — my house was filled with patients, chiefly the poor, — waiting for advice. For weeks, I seldom ate without prescribing for numbers as I sat at my table.

From constant exposure to the sources of the disease, — my body became highly impregnated

There is only one thing, ~~[illegible]~~ gentlemen, which ~~acts~~ is a drawback to the glory of our mission at ~~this~~ and other times of men's great need: and this is — that we can do for them so much less than we would. But, here is the range for our hope! for the increase of knowledge; for the progress of discovery; for the enlargement of our skill, — and multiplication of the resources of our art.

What is Cholera, — and Yellow-fever; — Phthisis, — Scarlatina? These, and other such questions, some day, will be answered; and, with the answer, — remedies will come. We have the language of the ~~same~~ eminent writer, — just alluded to, Dr Rush, — to justify this hope.

"They have", — he says, — "narrow conceptions, not only of the Divine Goodness, — but of the

gradual progress of human knowledge, who suppose that all pestilential diseases shall not, — like the small pox, — sooner or later cease to be the scourge and terror of mankind."

And hear, too, Druitt, — one of the most eminent surgeons & teachers of surgery of this age. "At present", says Druitt, "all treatment of cancer is palliative, — and directed against local manifestations and their results. But when we consider that, ten years ago, — before Bennett taught us the use of Cod-liver-oil consumption was almost regarded in the same light, — we surely need not yet despair of finding some substance which may destroy and eliminate what is noxious, or supply what is deficient, — and so bring this intractable disease within the proper sphere of therapeutics."

And, farther, we may quote to the same effect, — one of the greatest of modern Pathologists, — John Simon of London.

"For the primary forms of disease," he observes" — forms to be encountered and conquered by direct specific antidotes, — I may confess that as yet Pathology has done little. In discoveries of this nature, — the empiricism of 6000 years has achieved more than the new science, which can now as but in its infancy; but, — if accident has revealed, and if experience has confirmed for us, a knowledge of the properties of quinine, of mercury, of colchicum, of antimony, I cannot doubt that even these great results of popular observation will be transcended and eclipsed by the positive results of rational Pathology; — that cancer, gout and scrofula will presently yield

to philosophical investigation what they have reduced to blundering quackery; and that, within the lifetime of many now in existence, there will be a specific treatment of each diathesis, founded on an exact knowledge of the physiological laws of its manifestation."

What is then the object of all the instruction given in medical schools, — and ~~contained in~~ medical books, — and by Hospital ~~bedside~~, — but to inculcate the means by which to advance, — & to create, as nearly as may be, such discoveries? It is the purpose of all our courses — but more directly and as of special province perhaps of that which I have the honor ~~to~~ of endeavoring to fill, — to establish upon broad and ~~sure~~ foundations, those principles of study, — principles of thought, — and principles of action, — which will enable you to

This lecture, although not a long one, has sufficiently heavy, — and we many learn, till now, the consideration of the elements constituting the body. —